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080139Z Feb 06

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 10 DHAKA 000630

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [BG](#)

SUBJECT: SOLICITATION FOR INCLE FUNDS

REF: 2005 STATE 221416

¶1. Per 2005 STATE 221416, post is forwarding the following TIP proposal submitted by The Asia Foundation (TAF).

Given the limited resources available through INCLE this year, we do not feel this is this is a strong proposal. The problems addressed in this proposal are either adequately addressed through other USG funded programs, can not be solved yet through this type of program in Bangladesh, or require too much funding to serve too small an audience.

The three elements of this program are 1) community policing; 2) a regional anti-TIP website; and 3) training of Bangladeshi diplomats. While we support improved law enforcement and collaboration with law enforcement officials, we believe that the combination of a national police force, coupled with a climate of impunity for police and other officials, makes community policing unworkable here now. The regional TIP website is already up and running, so an additional USD 70,000 for its maintenance seems excessive. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) already has a grant to train entry level and midcareer diplomats, so this would be a duplication of efforts.

Post supports the proposal submitted by the Dept. of Justice Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT), which focuses on the training a small number of prosecutors on how to effectively prosecute traffickers. We suggest approving this proposal, with the following changes:

a) The RLA in Dhaka should approach the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Home Affairs to secure greater host country funding.

b) The RLA should work with the relevant authorities in Dhaka to ensure this course become a permanent part of the curriculum at the judicial training academy.

¶2. TAF's Proposal

¶A. I. Title: Building Community and Victim Protection Mechanisms and Strengthening Government Responses to Human Trafficking in Bangladesh

II. Recipient Organization: The Asia Foundation/Bangladesh

III. Project Duration: Two years

IV. Project Summary

The Asia Foundation (Foundation) requests a grant of \$472,560 for a two-year program that will strengthen the capacity of local communities, counter-trafficking organizations, and government agencies and officials to combat human trafficking; improve victim reintegration and recovery services; and improve the criminal justice response to human trafficking. The proposed program will address critical needs in three strategic niche program areas that are not being addressed by current counter-trafficking initiatives, while at the same time helping to enhance the impact of existing efforts.

The proposed program will advance core objectives through three complementary and mutually reinforcing components:

¶1. To build linkages and foster trust and collaboration between local community leaders, police, local government officials, non governmental organizations (NGOs), support service providers, and members of the community to prevent trafficking, increase police accountability in combating trafficking at the community level, file and pursue trafficking cases in the district courts, and facilitate the successful reintegration of victims back into their communities;

¶2. To strengthen the capacity of Bangladeshi Foreign Service officers to identify and repatriate trafficking victims and to raise the standards of official care provided to victims; and,

¶3. To revitalize coordination among counter-trafficking organizations, promote improved information sharing to increase innovation, enhance core capacities, reduce redundancy, and improve comprehensive victim services.

The proposed program will draw on the Foundation's long-standing

trust relations with government agencies and a broad range of NGOs and other civil society actors which it has assisted through its 52 years of on-the-ground presence in Bangladesh. It will further draw on the Foundation's expertise in justice sector reform, community legal service delivery, public security and criminal justice (including milestone work in community-oriented policing (COP)), human rights, legal empowerment, application of information technology tools to advance program goals, and international relations. In addition, the program will benefit from more than a decade of Foundation experience in counter-trafficking programming and best practice in South and Southeast Asia.

The program has been developed in close consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Bangladesh National Police, community leaders, and international and local organizations that are engaged in combating trafficking in persons. A key element of the Foundation's strategy for ensuring maximum impact will be regular communication, coordination, and networking with other organizations that are working to prevent internal and cross-border trafficking of Bangladeshi citizens. This will ensure that the combination of Foundation grant-making to local partner organizations and Foundation-managed program activities dovetail with the complementary work and core capacities of counterpart organizations with which U.S. government agencies and other international organizations are working.

IV. Background and Justification

While the Government of Bangladesh's response to human trafficking has measurably improved following its brief, but action-prompting, relegation to the U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons Tier 3 and subsequent restoration to Tier 2 Watch, human trafficking remains a serious human rights, criminal, social, and international relations issue in Bangladesh. The forms and mechanisms of human trafficking in Bangladesh are numerous. For example, border police are allegedly involved in the trafficking of young rural women on the western border as sex workers in West Bengal. Adolescent boys from the flood-prone char areas in northwestern Bangladesh are deceptively recruited by middlemen during the monga season to work in the dangerous ship-breaking industry in Chittagong. In a variety of contexts, parents surrender their children and pay "job placement fees" to traffickers who pose as legitimate employment agents with the promise of placement in lucrative jobs in India, Pakistan, or the Middle East, where children face exploitation and abuse.

In the rare cases in which victims are rescued and repatriated to their homes, the safe reintegration of "spoiled" girls and women back to their families and communities is undermined by pervasive social stigmas and lack of coordinated physical and psychosocial counseling and recovery services. Moreover, inadequate capacity on the part of law enforcement officers and the intrusion of corrupt practices and institutional complicity pose additional impediments to bringing human traffickers to justice. The challenge is exacerbated by lack of opportunities for citizens and communities to productively engage with police, Union Parishad (UP) members, medical professionals, social workers, and other public officials and stakeholders in understanding the dynamics of trafficking and repatriation efforts and the circumstances, needs, and rights of trafficking victims. This situation in turn constrains opportunities to take collective action in combating trafficking, to raise standards of police accountability through action of this kind, and to meet the security, counseling, livelihood, and other aftercare needs of trafficking survivors.

While the counter-trafficking movement in Bangladesh has progressed in significant ways, there is a consensus view among stakeholders that the quality of coordination and collaboration among domestic NGOs and international organizations has lost much of the momentum that characterized earlier efforts. Successful awareness raising campaigns have been undertaken by a variety of organizations in several areas across the country, yet victim services continue to vary in quality, outreach, and complementarity, and to be incomplete. Moreover, reintegration measures tend to occur on ad hoc basis, while systematic protocols are lacking and the response of law enforcement agencies remains weak. A number of local NGOs—including the Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA), the Centre for Women and Children Studies (CWCS), the Association for Community Development (ACD), Action Against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children (ATSEC), Rights Jessore, Uddipon, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), and Bangladesh Institute of Theater Arts (BITA)—have launched counter-trafficking awareness campaigns that aim to reach a variety of target audiences in different parts of the country. These campaigns include training of journalists on trafficking issues; counter-trafficking workshops and dialogues involving NGOs, professionals, and district and upazila leaders; and, public marches and popular culture shows. Notwithstanding these initiatives, recent research by INCIDIN Bangladesh and field investigations by Asia Foundation program staff have found that grassroots communities still have limited sources of information

on trafficking, as well as limited institutional means of raising awareness of trafficking at the community level. The implications include fundamental misunderstanding of the meaning of trafficking and the rights of trafficking victims.

Prosecution efforts are the least developed of counter-trafficking efforts in Bangladesh, although the Bangladeshi government has developed an anti-trafficking police cell in Dhaka and has committed to placing dedicated district-level anti-trafficking police and magistrates in all 64 districts. Foundation field investigations in November 2005 found that, at the district level, this framework and mechanisms for arrest, prosecution, and conviction of traffickers are in a more nascent stage of development than Dhaka-based government and non-government agencies may acknowledge. Local NGOs have conducted police training in gender sensitization and trafficking awareness, and counter-trafficking material also has reportedly been included in the curriculum of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) border patrol; however, police, BDR, and other elements of the criminal justice sector that operate in hotspot districts, including magistrates and public prosecutors, still appear to have not received specific training on victim identification and interview methods, filing first information reports (FIRs) and investigative reports, applying the correct laws, evidence collection and handling, and victim-centered trial proceedings-all of which are vital to achieving more trafficking convictions and justice for victims of exploitation.

Traditional community structures, institutions, and values influence the nature of relations between community members and the law enforcement, governance, and other institutions that serve them. This dynamic is central to addressing trafficking in Bangladesh, as it shapes the circumstances in which trafficking occurs, the mechanisms that exist to check it, and the manner in which victims are rescued, interviewed, accommodated in shelters, and eventually returned to a better, more secure life. The success of prevention, protection, prosecution, and recovery initiatives ultimately depends on the understanding and commitment of various community actors, including police, prosecutors, local government officials, shelter workers, public health professionals, counselors, alternative livelihood trainers, NGOs, the broader community, and families. There is a critical need to understand the dynamic of relations that are unique to particular geographic areas, individuals, and communities, and to develop support mechanisms that draw on the collective role, responsibilities, and competencies of different community members.

With respect to the broader public security environment in which human trafficking occurs, the situation in Bangladesh has deteriorated in recent years, with an increase in robbery, extortion, assault and intimidation, trafficking, and domestic violence and other crimes of violence against women. At the community level, a widening gap in mutual understanding, trust, and communication between police and citizens further undermines public security. A empirical baseline program planning survey of community-police relations conducted by The Asia Foundation in 2004 found that citizens have little trust or confidence in the police and prefer to exhaust alternative remedies before seeking police assistance when threatened or affected by crime. Police have little sense of professional duty towards citizens, while citizens in turn have a limited appreciation of the challenges that police face in performing their duties, such as inadequate manpower, lack of professional training or equipment, and low salaries. Tensions and misunderstandings in community-police relations are exacerbated by lack of opportunity for citizens to engage in good faith dialogue with police on issues of common interest or to reach joint solutions to issues that provoke conflict in community-police relations.

For the past two years, the Foundation has collaborated with the Bangladesh National Police, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Office of the Prime Minister, and local facilitating partner organizations in a milestone initiative to design and implement community-oriented policing in Bangladesh. The purpose of the program is to facilitate open and informed dialogue between police and members of the communities that they serve in identifying common criminal justice and public security issues, sharing views and expectations concerning their respective roles and responsibilities, and designing and implementing practical strategies through which citizens and police can work together to advance common interests and promote improved public security.

The Foundation's pilot program work has yielded encouraging results and valuable lessons that will inform ongoing work.

Examples include:

- Establishment of relationships of trust between NGO partners, police, and community stakeholders;
- Commitment to the concept of COP among citizens and police;
- Establishment of publicly acclaimed community-police forums in the three program areas;

s;

- Examples of the practical benefits that result from collaboration between citizens and police in addressing drug addiction, gambling, harassment of women, and other issues of concern to the community;

The broader interest that pilot program activities have generated among police, government officials, civil society organizations, and the media beyond the program sites.

NGO partners report striking anecdotal examples of progress toward narrowing the gap in understanding and respect between citizens and police. These include:

Participation by police superintendents and other senior officials in events organized by community members at the ward level, signaling a respect for the merit and substance of community interests that was absent from earlier police attitudes;

Readiness of police and citizens to devote voluntary time to the formation and activities of community-police forums;

Willingness of representatives of different political parties to lay aside political differences and work together as members of community-police forums;

Frequent calls from police and citizens in neighboring areas to launch COP programs in their localities.

Through their first 15 months of implementation, the pilot program activities have yielded these and other positive results, and several organizations involved in counter-trafficking have expressed an interest in the COP model to enhance counter-trafficking efforts and cooperation among a variety of community stakeholders. In response, the Foundation proposes to integrate trafficking prevention and victim protection in its efforts to build trust and foster collaboration between local communities and the police, and to include other actors who can add value to counter-trafficking initiatives. The proposed activities will add further value to existing efforts, recognizing that

expansive, nationwide justice sector trainings, such as those being undertaken by IOM, will only secure the desired increase in prosecutions if Bangladeshis are willing to file trafficking incident reports and to provide evidence and testimony to the police.

Victim protection efforts are also underway, with a few of the above-mentioned local NGOs running shelters for street children, sexually abused children, and trafficking survivors. Most of these shelters attempt "one-stop shop" provision of a variety of recovery services, including forensic and rehabilitative medical care and psychosocial treatment, education, vocational training, legal services, and-less frequently-ad hoc repatriation. These services are typically provided by well-meaning staff members that have to provide multiple specialized services (for example, psychosocial counseling and vocational training) without adequate training or certification. Another gap in victim protection services is the lack of follow-up mechanisms. The ultimate welfare outcome of the vast majority of trafficking victims after protective services are provided—that is, after shelter release, after vocational training completion, or after social reintegration—is unknown.

VI. Program Description

The Asia Foundation proposes to leverage its long-standing relationships with public institutions, local and international NGOs, and community-based organizations to implement a multi-faceted counter-trafficking strategy that involves community-level action to strengthen the law enforcement counter-trafficking response; address the lack of coordinated medical, social service, and other support networks; and, challenge the social stigmas that threaten the safety of trafficking victims and prevent them from successfully reintegrating back into their families and communities and from seeking and securing justice.

The proposed programs will build on the Foundation's successes, lessons learned, and best practice models from USG-supported counter-trafficking programs in Nepal and throughout Southeast and East Asia, and will complement the existing work of local organizations and development partners in addressing common interests. Foundation experience and relationships of trust from the national government level to the grassroots community level provide an excellent base for work in select program areas that will complement and add value to the existing trafficking prevention efforts of local organizations and development partners (including those supported by U.S. government agencies), and expand counter-trafficking efforts in Bangladesh where they are needed most. The criminal justice component of the program builds on a combination of established technical competencies in Bangladesh, including access to justice, COP, legal empowerment, and a long history of support to and working relations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Bangladesh National Police Academy, and civil society partners.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the program are:

1. To foster dialogue, trust-building, and multi-disciplinary cooperation involving government officials, local law enforcement agencies, communities, and counter-trafficking NGOs;

2. To strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and Bangladeshi Foreign Service officers to protect victims and aid in the prosecution of traffickers; and,

3. To enhance victim protection and services.

Objective 1: To foster dialogue, trust-building, and multi-disciplinary cooperation involving government officials, police, medical professionals and counselors, social service providers, communities, and counter-trafficking NGOs, and

Objective 3: To enhance victim protection and services.

Human traffickers are successful in recruiting and transporting victims due in large part to coordinated internal and cross-border mechanisms. In the face of these criminal networks, the counter-trafficking community can only expect to achieve measurable reductions in human trafficking if its members are similarly informed, coordinated, and networked. The Foundation proposes two activities to enhance counter-trafficking capacity, coordination, and political will at both the community/district level (particularly in hotspot source and border communities) and the national level, among NGOs, international NGOs, international organizations, government agencies, medical and social service providers, and donors.

Activity 1.1: Developing an integrated community approach to combating trafficking and supporting survivors in hotspot areas

The Foundation proposes to develop an integrated community approach to combating human trafficking that facilitates collaboration and action among law enforcement officers, Union Parishad members, religious leaders, medical professionals, counselors, shelter workers, livelihood trainers, NGO representatives, religious leaders, businesspersons, and other members of the community. Community groups will be convened to learn about and act on:

- the factors that make a community vulnerable to trafficking;
- the systems and networks through which traffickers operate;
- the challenges and pressures that law enforcement officials face in bringing perpetrators to justice or ensuring the security of rescued trafficking victims;
- how to build collaboration between police, community members, UP members, and other stakeholders to increase police accountability;
- the social stigmas faced by rescued victims when they return to their communities; and,
- the long-term support mechanisms required to ensure their secure and sustainable reintegration in the community and the steps that can be taken to promote better collaboration among various stakeholders.

ers.

Drawing on the experience of the Foundation's similar work with community protection networks in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, and on the Foundation's experience in COP in Bangladesh, this integrated program will place particular emphasis on awareness raising, formation of community watchdog groups that will work with law enforcement agencies and local government bodies to prevent and report trafficking, and support and recovery services for victims. The Foundation proposes to implement this cost-efficient, integrated approach in collaboration with local NGO partners in three areas that have high rates of trafficking. Partners will be selected on the basis of relevant experience and core competence for work of this kind. Potential partners include: Banchte Shekha, a women's empowerment NGO in Jessore District, with which the Foundation is presently working on COP programs; ACD, which operates in Rajshahi, Chapai Nawabganj, and Naogaon Districts on the western border with India; Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Services (RDRS) in Kurigram District; and, Uddipon, in the Chittagong area. Jessore, Rajshahi, Chapai Nawabganj, and Naogaon are located near border crossings of popular trafficking routes to Calcutta, while Kurigram District is home to the seasonally famine-prone char communities, where young men and women are vulnerable to trafficking to India, Chittagong, and other areas for sexual purposes and labor exploitation.

Program activities will include preliminary focus group discussions and participatory empirical research to map the features of trafficking in the particular communities; establishment of counter-trafficking forums in which a variety of stakeholders will meet regularly to discuss the empirical findings and plan activities; and, activities that will combine community dialogue, awareness raising, improved support services, professional capacity development, and articulation of community views and interests to national-level government agencies. The community-oriented approach will also contribute to the identification of new livelihood training programs and the expansion of current Foundation-supported livelihood training programs that hold the greatest potential in assisting trafficking victims to establish economic independence.

The distinctive feature of the Foundation's program approach is that it involves sustained interaction among the various

stakeholder groups, as opposed to periodic engagement for training, awareness-raising, or other activities. In this way, the community-oriented approach will build on the interests sown and the basic capacities established through complementary program interventions, adding further value to the work of IOM and other organizations that are providing training, conducting awareness-raising activities, and other interventions. Based on the approach utilized in its existing COP program, the Foundation will carefully monitor and document the experience of the pilot integrated community counter-trafficking programs, with the aim of identifying best practice for extension to other communities in future. Several government agencies have endorsed this approach as being urgently needed and strategic for combating trafficking of Bangladeshis.

The community-oriented approach will also serve as the basis for a complementary victim support intervention by Foundation program staff. Providing protection and recovery services to trafficking survivors is important for two major reasons: first, for the rights-based reason that victims of exploitation have rights to fundamental protections and assistance; and, second, to encourage victim participation in the law enforcement response and improve the chances of prosecuting traffickers. Although minimum standards for victim care and support have been agreed to in principle by representatives of the South Asian countries participating in the USAID-funded SARI/Q project, the standards have yet to be fully operationalized in ways that translate to results or improvements on the ground. In Bangladesh, large-scale investments by development partners underwrite the costs of shelters and other care facilities that house victims in extremely poor, non-empowering conditions and re-violate their human rights by restricting their freedom of movement and right to privacy, and effacing their dignity. In an attempt to attract large amounts of donor funds, some shelters model themselves into one-stop shops of comprehensive but low-quality services, with shelter managers doubling as (untrained) psychosocial counselors and vocational trainers, rather than choosing to coordinate with local counterparts to establish referral systems linking high-quality specialty organizations. With the poor conditions that many of these facilities offer, trafficking victims feel unprotected or sometimes threatened, and often will choose not to participate in the criminal justice process - and sometimes even flee the shelters, eventually ending up back in their exploitative environment.

The community-oriented approach will serve as a mechanism for increasing the quality of care facilities and adherence to formal standards. This will involve filling three critical gaps: first, victim support organizations there needs to be a tool to assess and monitor the quality and needs of a facility according to the agreed upon minimum standards for victim support and case management. The Asia Foundation has recently developed such a tool. Second, shelter workers and care providers require capacity building, coordination, and, often, transformation to a more survivor-centered philosophy, to ensure empowering, goal-oriented, and time-bound seamless services, including access to justice and legal assistance. Third, there should be better follow-up by service providers, using the knowledge and ideas of survivors to design more effective community protection programs.

As a value-added programmatic focus of the community-oriented approach, the Foundation will address these three gaps in collaboration with local NGO facilitating partners such as ACD, Uddipon, Rights Jessor, RDRS, and BITA, endeavoring to include as many local service providers as possible in the capacity building process. The Foundation will use its minimum standards for victim support assessment tool as a central prop to bring together shelter, psychosocial, legal, and skills training service providers in a series of training workshops where participants will: (i) assess the quality of care in their own facility and that of their peers according to the universally agreed-upon minimum standards, and pinpoint areas that require improvement; (ii) collaboratively design comprehensive victim support service systems in the major hotspot areas of Bangladesh, focusing not on one-stop-shop versus referral models but on maximization of quality of care (which may lead to different models in different areas); and, (iii) develop and begin implementing a time-bound plan to implement these comprehensive systems, with financial and technical inputs from the Foundation.

Sustainability: The integrated community support program is modeled on the Foundation's existing programmatic approach to COP in Bangladesh, in which police, local government officials, religious leaders, business persons, community leaders, and others devote time to program activities on a voluntary basis. For their leadership role in facilitating focus group discussions, baseline data collection, committee formation, regular stakeholder meetings, and other activities, NGO partners in the integrated community anti-trafficking program will receive modest financial support. They will further benefit from technical assistance from Asia Foundation program staff and local counter-trafficking specialists. By the end of two years, the program is expected to instill sufficient capacity and to secure sufficient commitment from key stakeholders to enable communities to continue core activities on a financially independent basis, and to leverage additional donor or government support for

activities that flow from preliminary work.

Activity 1.2: Developing an improved national-level approach to coordinating and improving counter-trafficking efforts: the TIPinAsia web portal (www.tipinasia.info)

Effective communication, information sharing, and coordination among NGOs, law enforcement officials, and other service providers are essential to combating trafficking; however, at present, collaboration in Bangladesh has lost momentum among NGOs, IOs, and government agencies that work on trafficking issues, and existing linkages, information sources, and exchange mechanisms are neither efficient nor consistently reliable, especially with the reduction in the frequency of Counter-Trafficking Thematic Group meetings over the last two years. The problems now faced by practitioners include a lack of a common vision and goals; a lack of knowledge of the activities undertaken by counterpart organizations; lack of efficient access to current laws, regulations, government initiatives, and research reports; and, a need for contact information for enforcement agencies, shelters, and other support services.

To meet these needs, the Internet provides a low-cost, broadly accessible platform for information sharing, management, and application. The Asia Foundation proposes to draw on its regional experience with innovative ICT applications to enhance the work of government and non-government counter-trafficking practitioners with www.tipinasia.info, a regional, multi-lingual, counter-trafficking web portal that has addressed similar information sharing challenges in Southeast Asia. The portal currently serves Cambodia, Thailand, and East Timor with Khmer, Thai, Tetum, Portuguese, and English language support. The Foundation proposes to expand www.tipinasia.info to include a Bangladesh site through which stakeholders can share information and better coordinate their work in Bangla and English. The website will serve as a cost-efficient meeting space to complement Counter-Trafficking Thematic Group meetings, serving as a platform for dialogue, exchange, service referrals, partner-finding, and consensus building. Building on earlier start-up investments and on best practice drawn from experience to date, start-up costs will be low and the time required to advance from pilot testing to full implementation will be relatively short.

Widespread Internet access among anti-trafficking organizations in Dhaka and district centers provides an excellent base for information sharing through a Bangladeshi version of www.tipinasia.info. The Bangladesh website will include a variety of features, including:

- Up-to-date news bulletins;
- Consolidated directory of services (including NGOs, community-based groups, police, Ministries and other government agencies, telephone hotlines, shelters, and donor agencies);
- Bangladeshi laws on trafficking, with annotations to ensure easy interpretation by non-legal professionals;
- Documents and reports from a variety of sources;
- Highlight pages in which NGOs can share their achievements or the challenges that they face; and
- Information and links to partners and services in other countries.

Sustainability: Establishment of the www.tipinasia.info website for Bangladesh will require a preliminary investment in hardware, technical assistance in Bangla language support, website construction, and other development costs. The Asia Foundation will coordinate the preliminary establishment of the Bangladesh website and associated technical support and training needs. The

The Foundation will identify a local partner organization that will gradually assume responsibility for administration and updating of the website. Consultations and information sharing by Foundation program staff to date suggest that counter-trafficking organizations will be eager to contribute in posting information and sustaining the website as they begin to draw on it for information exchange and coordination.

Objective 2: To strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Bangladeshi foreign service officers to assist and protect Bangladeshi victims of trafficking

The Foundation proposes to hone a more effective application of legal protection mechanisms in the work of Bangladeshi Foreign Service officers serving in embassies in destination countries for trafficked Bangladeshis. Improvements in the collection, documentation, management, and application of information and evidence-balancing the rights and interests of victims and those who give evidence on their behalf—are required if the newly-formed anti-trafficking units and prosecutors are to realize increasing numbers of successful prosecutions and convictions.

Activity 2.1: Increasing the capacity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Service officers and establishing victim identification and repatriation mechanisms within Bangladeshi embassies abroad

The government of Bangladesh recently changed its policy on trafficking victim repatriation mechanisms, shifting victim

identification and citizenship assessment responsibilities from embassies and high commissions to the Home Ministry in Dhaka. Accordingly, any initial information on possible trafficking victims collected by foreign police, high commission officers, or others cannot be processed on the ground, but instead has to be directed to the Home Ministry in Dhaka for processing. This arrangement results in significant delays in the repatriation of individuals deemed to be Bangladeshi citizens and trafficking victims, and often leads to denials of citizenship or repatriation assistance due to the paucity of information with which the Home Ministry makes determinations. Foreign Service officers no longer have the opportunity to investigate and revisit the case of a possible trafficking victim at the site and to use this information to make a citizenship determination; rather, they now have only one opportunity to transmit adequate case information to the Home Ministry in Dhaka.

With the new arrangement, the fate of Bangladeshi trafficking victims abroad now relies even more heavily on the ability of Bangladeshi embassy and high commission officers to swiftly and thoroughly collect information for the determination of victim status and citizenship and to transmit it to the Home Ministry in Dhaka. In addition, the information collected is critical in pursuing and prosecuting traffickers.

To enhance the protection of internationally trafficked victims by Bangladeshi embassies and high commissions and to increase the quality of evidence gathered for the prosecution of cross-border traffickers, The Asia Foundation proposes to expand its pilot counter-trafficking training program for Bangladesh Foreign Ministry officers. In 2005, the Foundation launched a pilot training program for entry-level Foreign Service officers at the invitation of the Principal of the Foreign Service Academy (FSA) and with the keen endorsement of the Foreign Secretary. The pilot training program features a half-day curriculum that covers the mechanics of victim interview, assessment of trafficking victim status and citizenship, and repatriation protocol standards, given to probationers to begin the institutionalization of these victim handling mechanisms within the Foreign Ministry. Based on the positive response of the principal, faculty, and students of the FSA and the Foreign Ministry, the Foundation proposes to expand the training module to a full day and to target a combination of entry-level officers and, in particular, mid-level career officers. The expanded training program will include guest speakers such as prosecutors and local anti-trafficking practitioners, and feature a sharing of best practices from diplomats and visiting officials, including U.S. Embassy and State Department officials.

Sustainability: The Foundation and the Bangladeshi Foreign Ministry aim to institutionalize a standard trafficking victim repatriation protocol into Bangladeshi embassies. After completing training programs for entry-level Foreign Service officers and several classes of mid-level officers, the curriculum and all materials developed will be incorporated into the standard training portfolios of the FSA. In addition, the development of a training-of-trainers curriculum will ensure that the Ministry has the capacity to conduct training programs on both a regular and as-needed basis, in a sustainable manner. The Foundation training team will continue to provide specialized training support as requested, and to provide technical assistance to Ministry counterparts in refining training curricula or introducing new programs.

VII. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Asia Foundation has been at the forefront of efforts to build a results-based orientation into its programming. In designing and implementing programs, the Foundation specifies the project objectives, activities to be implemented, evaluation criteria, substantive reporting requirements, performance indicators, and financial management and reporting procedures to be followed, and works closely with local partners in determining respective roles in data collection, analysis, and reporting. The Foundation tracks the progress of activities implemented through a series of monitoring and evaluation steps, including regular meetings with project partners. These allow the Foundation to assess progress, remove constraints, and respond to new opportunities as programs proceed. Technical assistance is provided as needed to ensure quality and timely project completion. The Foundation will develop a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan in consultation with local partners and work closely with its partners in collecting, documenting, and analyzing information and reporting results and lessons learned.

VIII. Asia Foundation Capacity

The Asia Foundation is a non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to the development of a peaceful, prosperous, and open Asia-Pacific region. The Foundation supports programs in Asia that help improve governance and law, economic reform and development, women's participation, and international relations. Drawing on 52 years of experience in Asia, the Foundation collaborates with private and public partners to support leadership and institutional development, exchanges, and

policy research. With a network of 18 offices throughout Asia, an office in Washington, D.C., and its headquarters in San Francisco, the Foundation addresses these issues on both a country and regional level.

The Foundation has maintained a resident office and country program in Bangladesh continuously since 1954. Through a combination of grants, technical assistance, and operational activities, the Foundation supports the efforts of local partners in government, civil society, and the private sector to promote more responsive and accountable governance, broad-based economic growth, advancement of basic rights and security, and enhanced dialogue and understanding between Bangladesh and other countries in the region. In all programs, the Foundation places high priority on advancing the role of women in Bangladeshi society.

The Foundation is a leader in the fight against trafficking in persons in the Asia-Pacific region. It recognizes that to have a meaningful impact on trafficking, transnational solutions are critical. Through its 18 offices and network of partners across the Asia-Pacific region, the Foundation has a distinctive ability to convene policymakers, practitioners, and advocates who plan and co-execute concrete local, national, bilateral, and regional initiatives to combat trafficking.

Foundation programs in twelve countries:

- Support government and non-governmental initiatives to stop trafficking;
- Promote communication and coordination among actors working to combat trafficking;
 - Advance legal rights education for vulnerable groups;
 - Support legal aid services for victims and legal education for police, judges, and other law enforcement officials and agencies;
 - Provide public education (particularly in at-risk communities) on the dangers of trafficking and self-protection;
 - Promote laws and policies to combat trafficking;
 - king;
 - Support advocacy campaigns to hold government accountable for establishing and enforcing anti-trafficking laws;
 - Provide small loans, vocational training, and other resources to increase economic opportunities for vulnerable groups; and
 - Fund shelters and other services for victims.

13. Budget Breakout

LINE ITEM	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	TOTAL
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TOTAL			
<u>1. PROGRAM ACTIVITY COSTS</u>			
<u>1.1. Integrated Community Anti-Trafficking Program</u>			
1.1 Baseline research and community planning	30,000		
\$30,000			
1.2 Community programs	102,000	106,000	
208,000			
1.3 Enhancing formal standards observation in shelters	3,000	3,000	6,000
1.4 National-level dialogue and information sharing	2,000	3,000	5,000
Sub-total:	137,000	112,000	249,000

12. Improved Communication, Information Sharing, and Coordination Through ICT:
TIPinAsia/Bangladesh

2.1 Website design, hosting, technical support, t, and administration	25,000	7,000	32,000
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2.2 Information collection and coding	5,000	4,000	9,000
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2.3 Collaboration meetings	2,000	3,000	5,000
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2.4 Facilitation of access to users in remote areas	5,000	5,000	10,000
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2.5 Follow-up coordination and information sharing projects	6,000	7,000	
13,000			

Sub-total:	43,000	26,000	69,000
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13. Training Foreign Service Officers to Protect and Assist Trafficking Victims
3.1 Training Courses

8,000	10,000	18,000
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3.2 Curriculum and
materials development 2,000 3,000 5,000

Sub-total: 10,000 13,000 23,000

Total Program Activities: 190,000 151,000
341,000

II. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT COSTS

11. Personnel 21,305 20,719 42,024

12. Staff Travel
(domestic and international
airfares, ground
transportation, and per diem) 5,449 5,721
11,170

13. Other Direct Costs 10,038 10,294 20,332

Total Program
Management Costs: 36,792 36,734 73,526

TOTAL DIRECT COSTS: 226,792 187,734 414,526

III. INDIRECT COSTS @ 14 percent 31,751 26,283
58,034

GRAND TOTAL \$258,543 \$214,017
\$472,560

14. Embassy Point of Contact is Denise Jobin Welch, Political
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